

**EVALUATING THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE WITHIN THE  
COPPELL FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Executive Leadership

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## **Abstract**

The challenge examined was that the Coppell Fire Department did not have a structured program to review the current organizational culture or a plan to implement desired results. The purpose of the research project was to evaluate the current organizational culture and based on the results, recommend a formal process that would implement the desired culture of the fire department. The procedures used consisted of a literary review, interviews, and a survey. Descriptive research methods were applied to answer the following questions.

1. What is organizational culture?
2. What is the current culture of the Coppell Fire Department?
3. What is the ideal culture of the Coppell Fire Department?
4. What should be done to enhance the organizational culture within the Coppell Fire Department?

The results and associated recommendation indicate the need to implement results from the Organizational Needs Inventory (ONI) and related Leadership Action Plan (LAP) to develop the “ideal” culture of the department.

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## Introduction

The ultimate objective of the fire service is “to deliver the highest level of emergency response with the greatest margin of safety in the most fiscally responsible way” (Manning, 1995). To accomplish this objective, the modern playing field has changed significantly. Although resources such as apparatus, tools, equipment, and facilities, are essential towards meeting goals and objectives, the primary success factor is the development of people and the organization’s culture (Maxwell, 1993). The city of Coppell, Texas has experienced significant growth in recent years. As a result, the organization has concentrated primarily on managing resources and has overlooked the development of the organization’s culture, and such lack of direction has left the department with a less than desirable culture that lacks effective communication, trust, and teamwork, leading to increased potential for injury, loss of life, or property.

The purpose of this research project is to evaluate the current organizational culture and based on the results, recommend a formal process that will develop the desired culture of the fire department. Clear, concise answers to the following questions will be critical in accomplishing this task:

1. What is organizational culture?
2. What is the current culture of the Coppell Fire Department?
3. What is the ideal culture of the Coppell Fire Department?
4. What should be done to enhance the organizational culture within the Coppell Fire Department?

## Background and significance

The city of Coppel, Texas covers an area of approximately 14.8 square miles with a resident population of 39,193 (census, 2006) and is located in the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area bordering the DFW International Airport. In recent years, the city has experienced significant growth. According to the 2006 census, the residential population has doubled since the late 1990s. Statistics from City of Coppel's website indicate the average home is valued at \$278,000 and typically includes 2.3 children . The commercial and light industrial areas have also experienced significant development in the construction of distribution warehouses, fabrication plants, light assembly, office spaces, and corporate headquarters. The demographics of the community include an average adult age of 48 years with a median income of \$189,000 annually. Although the residential zoning areas are nearing "build out," commercial development continues to excel.

The Coppel Fire Department (CFD) consists of a fire chief, three deputy chiefs, three battalion chiefs, twelve (12) captains, sixty four (64)) firefighters, and two clerical positions. The Department provides fire, rescue, and emergency medical services from four facilities strategically located throughout the community and has recently received a Class 1 rating from the Insurance Service Office.

In recent years, the number of emergency response calls has increased to approximately 4,000 annually. Additionally, the organization has recently selected and appointed it's 4th Fire Chief in the last 10 years. The growth of the city, department, increased calls for service, and changing Administrations has left the organization to self develop with very little guidance. The department has no formal process or guidelines to

implement a culture that supports the current administration and the needs of the organization. The current situation has developed several cultures within the organization based on different fire stations and shifts without any relationship to the mission of the Department.

As community service demands grow, a fire agency must develop effective and efficient methods to meet the new challenges (NFA, 2000). One method is to conduct an Organizational Needs Inventory (ONI) to determine the desired culture and develop a plan for implementation. An ONI process contains significant findings as perceived by the members of the department. The process includes a series of confidential questions related to Organizational Structure, Predominant Leadership Style, and Organizational Culture.

Historically, the department has attempted to complete a series of ONI's to develop the "ideal" organizational culture. Each new Fire Chief was provided an opportunity to conduct the process to determine a baseline of the organization as they began their tenure. The first ONI, conducted in December 1997, created a snapshot of the organization as employees perceived it at the time. It also established a baseline from which future progress could be measured as the organization developmental process moved the department to its "ideal" or desired culture. However, the results were kept confidential and no actions were taken to implement the desired results. Although additional ONI's were conducted by newly appointed Fire Chiefs in April 1999 and November 2003, no results have been discussed or implemented.

The focused effort of the Fire Department to develop its culture and align the Command Staff with the City's desired culture have been absent altogether. The most

recent Administration Team have all since retired from the organization. Unfortunately, their last few years of service provided little or no direction for the organization. As the previous administration began to prepare for retirement, their focus was to develop leadership within the Command Staff. However, as they withdrew from active engagement in their own leadership roles, a growing void occurred in overall direction for the department.

The Battalion Chiefs and Captains stepped-up to provide leadership and focused on the day to day operations of the department. They made strong efforts to work as a team in handling cross-company/cross-shift issues. However, the mode of operations under pending retirements created a significant disconnection from the administration. There was no clear direction, the communication flow was blocked, supervisors were not receiving response or validation for decisions that needed administrative input, trust in the leadership was low and there was little or no explanation of changes occurring within the department. In short, there was an absence of active leadership and the department is currently responding in a desperate level of survival.

The need for an effective ONI has become more critical as the department continues to grow and develop. The lack of attention to the development and implementation of a desired culture has led to free-lancing during emergency incidents, inconsistent delivery of services, inappropriate behavior, and employee morale issues. In his book on organizational development, (Burke, 1987) stated that the role and responsibility of leaders and managers in preparing for and facilitating organizational change should be directed toward identifying the root causes of organizational problems and developing and implementing appropriate interventions. Although the intent of this

study is to identify the current culture and recommend a program to implement desired results, it's primary purpose is to reduce the potential for loss of lives and property.

For organizational development to be effective it requires the involvement of all personnel within the organization. The optimum process will allow participation from members within the organization to identify the current culture of the department, determine the desired culture, develop a plan, implement results, and monitor outcome. By understanding the culture of the department and participating in the process, members will be better prepared to enhance the quality of the organization and the services it provides through better utilization of human resources.

This research has been accomplished in accordance with the guidelines associated with the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy. The problem relates to several components of the Executive Leadership curriculum, in that understanding transition is critical when implementing change. As stated in terminal objective number six of the Executive Leadership program, "the opportunity for success can be enhanced if we are willing to look inward and reflect on what is happening to us; to plan for what we really want; and finally, to take appropriate action to meet these challenges" (FEMA, 2005 SM 6-3). Further, this research project relates to objective number two of the United States Fire Administration (USFA) five year operational objective "develop comprehensive all-hazard risk reduction plans" (USFA, 2004).

### Literature Review

The literature review was organized around the project's four research questions. The first question asked "what is organizational culture?" There is no single definition for organizational culture. The topic has been studied from a variety of perspectives



ranging from disciplines such as anthropology and sociology, to the applied disciplines of organizational behavior, management science, and organizational communication.

Wikipedia on-line dictionary defines organizational culture as “the specific collection of values and norms that are shared by people and groups in an organization and that control the way they interact with each other and with stakeholders outside the organization.”

Schein (1993) describes as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that groups learn as they solve the problems of external adaption and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to problems. A set of understandings or meanings shared by a group of people that are largely tacit among members and are clearly relevant and distinctive to the particular group which are also passed on to new members (Louis, 1980). A system of knowledge, of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating and acting . . . also serve to relate human communities to their environmental settings (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984). The deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs are learned responses to the group's problems of survival in its external environment and its problems of internal integration; they are shared by members of an organization; and, actually operate unconsciously; thus defining, in a basic "taken -for-granted" fashion an organization's view of itself and its environment (Schein, 1988). Any social system arising from a network of shared ideologies consisting of two components: (1) Substance-the networks of meaning associated with ideologies, norms, and values; and (2) Forms-the practices whereby the meanings are expressed, affirmed, and communicated to members (Trice and Beyer, 1984).

This sampling of definitions represents the two major camps that exist in the study of organizational culture and its "application strategies." The first camp views culture as implicit in social life. Culture is what naturally emerges as individuals transform themselves into social groups as tribes, communities, or in this case, fire stations. The second camp represents the view that culture is an explicit social product arising from social interaction either as an intentional or unintentional consequence of behavior. In other words, culture is comprised of distinct observable forms (e.g., language, use of symbols, ceremonies, customs, methods of problem solving, use of tools or technology, and design of work settings) that groups of people create through social interaction and use to confront the broader social environment (Wuthnow and Witten, 1988).

The second question that must be asked is "what is the current culture of the Coppel Fire Department?" Several techniques and methods were reviewed to determine the best course of action. According to Leadership Consultant Joe Gonzalez, owner of Management Connection, Inc., the Organizational Needs Inventory (ONI) is recognized as one of the most widely used and thoroughly researched organizational surveys in the world. The ONI provides a picture of an organization's operating culture in terms of the behaviors that members believe are expected or implicitly required. By guiding the way in which members approach their work and interact with one another, these "behavioral norms" determine the organization's capacity to solve problems, adapt to change, and perform effectively. Humanistic Synergetics Inc., a leader in organizational evaluations further states that ONI results illustrate individual normative beliefs (when the perspective of only one person is plotted) or the shared behavioral expectations that

operate within the organization (when the perspectives of multiple people are combined). A picture of the preferred culture is provided when the ONI “Ideal” is administered. Results are presented for 16 behavioral norms grouped by three clusters (Organization Structure, Predominant Leadership Style, and Organizational Culture).

Northwestern University describes another method to determine organizational cultures. Basically, organizations fall into one of two basic culture types: Constructive and Defensive. Constructive cultures tend to be outward-looking and responsive to market and technological changes. They expect achievement at both the individual and the group level. Collaboration and coordination across departments are not optional — it is expected and it is how they operate. In businesses generally, those with a constructive culture deliver superior long-term performance and more satisfied customers and employees. In contrast, defensive cultures resist change. People are expected to focus on how well they are doing, as opposed to how well the group or the organization — or customer — is doing. They tend to operate in departmental silos. In the past, defensive cultures fared well, producing consistent, reliable products and services because changes in the environment such as technology, demography and competition have been slow-moving. But today they are ill-equipped to respond to rapidly changing customer needs, surging competition and revolutionary advances in technology.

According to Inquire Within Inc., Management and Consulting Services, another method to determine Organizational Culture is by using the Repertory Grid. The Repertory Grid interview process provides a structured way of comparing effective and less effective performance and capturing it in the interviewee's words without imposing

someone else's model or way of thinking. Repertory Grid facilitates the application of that interview structure. It is the language that is used to describe effectiveness rather than how individuals are described that is important. The major disadvantage with this process is based on subjectivity of interview results and is difficult to quantify with other participants. Therefore, the Organizational Needs Inventory ONI process was determined to be the best method for this project.

The third question asked “what is the desired organizational culture of Coppell Fire Department?” It was determined that a review of a successful organizational culture would provide valuable insight on desirable traits. The Phoenix Fire Department document entitled “The PFD Way” defines the Department’s philosophy and organization culture with the following seven key elements: Providing the Best Service to Customers, Providing the Best Possible Support to Department Members, Members Fitting Certain PFD Characteristics, Managing Change/Always Improving, Members Being Responsible for the Organization, Promoting and Supporting the PFD “Way,” Continuing Tradition, and Leaving No One Behind. The document also states that the most important resource to the Department is its members. Additionally, once a small organization grows to the point that it is considered large, it loses its individuality. In other words, the individual member becomes less known in the system, and therefore less important. No matter what position an individual fills within the Department, they are considered important and are treated as such.

According to Team Works International, Professional Services, the ideal organizational culture is “one which optimizes everyone’s ability to achieve personal,

unit and organizational objectives.” It must, by its very nature, maximize customer joy, trust, and loyalty. Business Improvement Architects, Inc. further defines the ideal organizational culture as “one in which projects are considered in strategic planning and are implemented to support an organization’s corporate strategy and corporate objectives.” In this way, they receive the necessary attention and support of senior management and the organization’s resources to allow them to succeed. Each organization will have its own ‘ideal’ organizational culture, support systems, and internal and external resources to achieve this.

As previously stated, Constructive cultures encourage members to work to their full potential, resulting in high levels of motivation, satisfaction, teamwork, service quality and growth. The primary style in the ideal fire service culture is Humanistic, managed in a participative and person-centered way where people are expected to be supportive and open to collaboration. The secondary style is Achievement, whereby people are expected to know the industry, pursue a standard of excellence and plan well. Benefits include appropriate problem-solving and effective customer service. Constructive cultures tend to be found in organizations that seriously focus on system-wide improvements and innovations, and practice empowerment and change-oriented leadership.

The last question asked is “what should be done to enhance the organizational culture within the department?” Collins (2001) indicates the initial step is to set a new direction, a new vision and strategy for the organization, and then to get people committed and aligned behind the new direction. He concludes three simple truths.

First, if you begin with “who” rather than “what,” you can more easily adapt to a changing world. Second, if you have the right people on the bus, the problem of how to motivate and manage people largely goes away. Third, if you have the wrong people, it doesn’t matter whether you discover the right direction; you still won’t have success. Ritcheske (2001) indicates that trust is a must. Without trust, there is little on which to build sustainable success. Additionally, successful organizations genuinely care about people. They feel a responsibility to create a work environment in which people are respected and recognized, and they ensure that their people are adequately trained. Conger (1998) believes credibility is the primary factor when changing organizational culture. In his text, *Winning ‘Em Over*, Conger states that credibility is the starting point for effective persuasion. It is a critical factor, since persuasion most often takes place in situations where there are no clear answers. In these circumstances, where no single answer is clear, we tend to turn to the person whose expertise we believe in. Coleman (1995) believes leadership is the key to improving culture. Leadership is taking an organization from where it is now to where it has to be sometime in the future. This often involves vision and influence, but leaders are not always responsible for getting the job done, only for motivating others to want to do a job. Leadership is providing a direction, or a focus that drives the organization to move in a specific direction

### Procedures

The desired outcome of this applied research project was to identify the organization’s culture, make recommendations for improvement, and develop a plan for implementation. In doing so, descriptive research methods were used. The research began with a literature review at the National Fire Academy’s Learning Resource Center.

The review focused on organizational culture and included extensive research of periodicals, text, literature, and similar Applied Research Projects. Additional information was gathered from both the author's private library and from the Coppell Fire Department's resource center. Review of textbooks included industry related and non-fire service texts focusing on organizational culture. Industry journals, magazines, and National Fire Protection Association manuals were examined during the research process. The review also included searching the World Wide Web using keywords; "organizational culture" and "fire service culture."

A personal interview was conducted with Joe Gonzalez as a method to obtain information regarding the Organizational Needs Inventory (ONI) process. Mr. Gonzalez is the owner of The Management Connection, Inc. and has provided leadership development consultation and services to the City of Coppell for many years. His company has performed three previous ONI assessments of the fire department and provided statistical data from each (appendix B). The gathered information from previous ONI's served as a benchmark for determining the changes in organizational culture.

The Organizational Needs Inventory (ONI) survey was used to gain information related to the research questions. The survey included 125 questions associated with three primary factors (Organizational Structure, Predominant Leadership Style, and Organizational Culture) and their sub-factors of the ONI. Each question is measured on the 1 to 10 scale. A score on the 1 to 10 scale is a point along a line between two extremes, i.e. Bureaucratic versus Versatile. The intent was to develop a Gap analysis

between the two extremes, enabling the Department to compare its “actual” performance with its “desired” results.

The next step defined the survey group and the process to complete the survey forms. The intent was to include every member of the Coppell Fire Department. This would encompass civilians, new recruits, tenured firefighters, supervisors, and Chief Officers. Overall, this included all 84 members in the organization. The Fire Chief distributed a schedule of mandatory assignments to participate in the controlled survey process. All surveys were conducted in a classroom style setting and included instructions and supervision without any time limits for completion.

The next step established a method to compile the results and analyze data. The survey answers were generated on scantrons and were easily transferred into organized results via computer program. The raw data helped assess the current interpretation and the desired results for each topic question. Because this was a Gap analysis, it is very important to not think of one end of the scale as good and the other end as bad. What is “ideal” depends greatly upon the organization’s history, attitudes, beliefs, and traditions of present members, and many other variables that are addressed in sub-factors of the ONI survey. The Gap score provides a basis for planning and goal setting that will move towards the “ideal” results. This does not mean the department should believe that the perceived “ideal” or the perceived “actual” scores are realistic. However, perceptions have much to do with organizational effectiveness and should not be ignored.

The last step helped address the final research question, what should be done to enhance the organizational culture within the Coppell Fire Department. This process included several lengthy group meetings with all department officers. The purpose of the



meetings was to interpret the data and establish clear recommendations for improvement. The process included input from all supervisors and allowed group discussion and debate regarding corrective actions and implementation.

## Results

Although the Literature Review identified several definitions of organizational culture, the most relative definition is simply “the psychological atmosphere that emerges out of the way an organization conducts itself.” It’s the cultural climate that shapes the attitudes and guides the behavior, ultimately defining whether the organization is good, or not so good, place to be. Experience shows that the organizational culture can encourage or dissipate effort. It can promote openness or silence; encourage risk taking or status quo; and, allow for differences or agreements. A good environment, shaped by a strong positive culture allows the participants to be focused and productive. A bad environment, diverts meaningful effort into meaningless distractions; turf battles, power struggles, personal agendas, and bad decisions.

Further, the Literature Review refers to organizational culture as the pattern of values, beliefs, norms and behaviors shared by an identifiable group of individuals. Organizational culture is the way a fire department operates. For example, the “way” training is accomplished in the Coppell Fire Department depends on the initiatives of the Captains. A multitude of factors create an organization’s culture, including the content and pattern of interactions, the role members enact and their relationships, and the norms and rules guiding the Department’s actions. Each shift and station has a unique mix of members, purposes, rules, and behaviors that is exclusive to themselves. The

Department's culture is never static, always evolving and adapting to the changing circumstances of the organization.

As fire department organizational culture develops, individuals are taught to perceive the environment based on passed experiences, beliefs and values of the Department. Cultural identity is the identification with and perceived acceptance into a group that has a shared system of symbols, meanings, and rules of conduct. This is the reason fire administrators try to assign new members to the "best" station which will be supervised by a high quality captain. Since it is during this informative time that the new member will develop most of their views of the fire service and how things are done in the department, it is important to assign mentors who display traits consistent with the organization's desirable values.

The Literature Review determined that the Organizational Needs Inventory (ONI) survey would be the most effective method to identify the existing culture within the Coppell Fire Department. The CFD has its own organizational culture which, to a great extent, determines how the members act, perform, and behave. The ONI survey instrument asked 125 questions specifically related to Organizational Structure, Predominant Leadership Style, and Organizational Culture. The results from the survey were further grouped into sub-factors with associated Gap analysis (Appendix A).

Sub-factors with a Gap analysis less than 2.0 were determined to be low priorities. These areas include; Formalization, Flexibility, Nature of Jobs, and View of Human Nature. Status differences are discouraged; employees on different levels relate informally as persons of equal worth; all are important and valued. Commitment to growth, change, adaptability and rapid response to environmental demands produces a

high degree of flexibility. Cross trained members of self-directed teams and task forces cooperate to assume responsibility for shared objectives. Employees prefer to be productive and responsible and work independently and creatively to solve problems.

Sub-factors with a Gap analysis between 2.0 and 2.5 were determined to be medium priorities. These areas include; Authority Orientation, Team Orientation, Nature of Supervision, Shared Values and Beliefs, and Innovation. Authority is delegated to enable supervisors to get their work done through others. At times, groups undermine both motivation and efficiency of projects without proper teamwork and cooperation of others. Close supervision is sometimes necessary to ensure high motivation and maximum productivity. Shared attitudes and values are of limited importance depending on work groups and shift assignments. The department embraces technical progress and places a very high priority on customer service.

Sub-factors with a Gap analysis greater than 2.5 were determined to be areas needing significant improvement. These areas include; Motivation Style, Empowerment, Communication Style, Identification with the Organization, and Trust. These are the primary sub-factors associated with the negative side, and especially at the line level, there is the uncertainty of “where are we going and what are we trying to be?” Motivation is based solely on compensation and benefits and has been described as “what’s in it for me?” Authority-based power is the supervisor’s primary resource for influencing subordinates. Giving them more power undermines that influence. In some instances there is an absence of accountability for things people do or don’t do. Communications are very limited and information is dispensed on a need-to-know basis. The lack of using the chain of command, and ineffective communications, produces

rumors that cause conflict in the organization. Inconsistent direction for tasks such as training and station duties has resulted in more misunderstandings. The sub-factor on Trust generated the largest Gap analysis of 3.2. The perception from the line personnel is the Administration does not care about the Department or it's members. Although trust exists between most line personnel, the largest barrier for trust exists between line personnel and the Administration.

Overall, the organizational culture of the CFD varies considerably depending on specific work group and station assignments. Generally speaking, most employees take pride in their equipment and apparatus maintenance is a very high priority. The department set's high performance standards for mission accomplishment (putting out fires, emergency medical response, and technical rescue), how hard an employee "works" is highly valued on the floor in the stations. Being in good physical shape is a department-wide expectation and a point of pride for many. The concept of being both progressive and a small town is embraced by department members.

While the existing overall organizational culture is less than desirable there is much room for improvement – changes that will make it a better fire department and better place to work. The concept of organizational culture, both in general terms and as it pertains to the Coppell Fire Department is extremely complex. As is the case in any bureaucracy, maintaining a positive organizational culture is not accomplished without considerable effort.

What is the desired culture of the Coppell Fire Department? According to Jim Witt, City Manager, the City of Coppell expects the leadership within the organization to support and actively develop a versatile, participative, and supportive organizational

culture. Supportive being whether it be employee to employee, division within a department, or department to department, all members understand and act on the principle that recognition of mutual dependency, shared goals, and trust encourage cooperation, mutual respect, and a feeling of pride in identification with the organization. Participative employees will develop into self-leaders as they internalize and practice the organization's vision, mission, and values. A sense of ownership and personal responsibility comes from participation in the flow of communication and ideas that lead to decisions, direction, and practices. Versatile so that the structure of the organization is appropriately informal and personal, flexible whenever possible, able to adapt and change as needed for effectiveness, and capable of quick response to changes in internal and external environments.

After reviewing results from the Coppell Fire Department ONI survey, it is clear the results fully support the "desired" culture and vision of the City Manager. The department members support going above and beyond expectations and want to display a sense of pride and ownership that includes shared values, goals, and responsibilities. Further, the ONI results indicated the need to empower the membership. The desired culture embraces leadership that will provide a sense of direction and then do everything possible to provide the resources needed to succeed. A free flow of communication is necessary for participative decision making, team building, shared goals, and mutual support. Additionally, members who strongly identify with the organization feel a sense of oneness with it. To support the organization is to support themselves; a culture where trust is highly valued and provides the basis for sound, cooperative, mutually empowering relationships upon which leadership is based. Cooperation based on trust

and shared self-interest, is necessary for maximum productivity and work satisfaction. Perhaps the greatest single desired cultural trait is making people a priority. This includes not only during emergency response activities but within the organization itself. A genuine caring and concern for all department members will go a long way.

What should be done to enhance the organizational culture within the department? The author visited all stations and shifts within the department. Additionally, separate meetings were conducted individually with each Staff Officer. Overall, the visits included every member within the organization. The meetings were intended to provide an opportunity to review the ONI survey results and obtain informal feedback on the process and listen to suggested recommendations.

The primary discussion topic revolved around participative leadership. The general consensus is for an organizational structure that is versatile, informal, personal, and flexible and constantly changes as needed for effectiveness and quick to respond to industry changes. The organization was routinely described as bureaucratic with lots of rules, regulations, procedures, lines of authority and other structures that make the Department sluggish and rigid. The members prefer a predominant leadership style that is participative where followers are transformed into self-leaders as they internalize the vision, mission, values, attitudes, goals, and objectives of the Department. Likewise, directive and forceful leadership where supervisors have a right to command and subordinates have an obligation to obey should be avoided. Additionally, the membership embraces an organizational culture that is supportive of its personnel, shares goals, encourages cooperation, emphasizes a high level of trust, and properly trains the team to maintain a high level of self-discipline, self-motivation, and exceptional quality.

Ultimately, a collaborative effort to review the ONI results and developing a plan for implementation is highly anticipated by the organization.

### Discussion

Culture refers to the pattern of values, beliefs, norms and behaviors shared by an identifiable group of individual. Basically culture is “the way things get done” in an organization. This is especially noted in the fire service where years of tradition in lieu of standard operating procedures typically dictate how things get done.

Every fire department has a culture; including the CFD. The difficulty lies in determining the culture, identifying the ideal concepts, and implementing improvements. Although several methods were reviewed, the Organizational Needs Inventory (ONI) provided the most effective results for this research. Surprisingly, the ONI process was well received and simple to administer. Generally speaking, most of the membership were pleased to participate and eager to review the results and contribute in implementing recommendations.

It was not surprising to find that the ideal culture of the CFD should be one that is versatile, participative, and supportive with a special emphasis on the team concept, effective communication and a high level of trust. The largest Gap analysis of 3.2 related to the issue of “trust.” This finding is consistent with the author’s personal experiences within the department. Ritcheske (2001) believes that honesty, integrity, and caring are essential factors for building trust. Communication was also noted as having a large Gap of 2.8. Again, this finding was expected in the results. Collins (2001) states that “effective communication is a key ingredient when transforming organizations from good to great.” The general consensus among CFD personnel supports the need to

improve both formal and informal communications throughout the Department.

Surprisingly, the area of “motivation” received a large Gap of 2.8. Maxwell (1993) states that motivated people are the most appreciable asset to an organization. Motivation comes not by activity alone but by the desire to reach the end result. Therefore, the vision and mission of the CFD must be communicated and understood by all Department members.

Clearly, the research supports the need to improve the organizational culture within the Coppel Fire Department. While some portions of the ONI survey were rated in a positive fashion, others were not; and continue to deteriorate the effectiveness of the organization. Although the ONI survey is complete, the next step is to work towards implementing the “ideal” culture for the Department. The process must include participation from all levels within the organization. One suggested method includes round-table discussions in the fire stations identifying key areas of improvement for each sub-factor from the ONI survey. This process would be followed by a supervisor’s commitment to review results and further discuss potential recommendations. Finally, publish the results in a formal document to be used for implementation.

Maxwell (1993) defines leadership as the ability to influence people. Leadership is a critical element in maintaining high standards of performance and the positive image of the Department within the community and fire service. There are many leaders in the CFD. Some are formal leaders who have this responsibility not only because of their structured positions in the Department, but usually because of demonstrated ability. This leadership responsibility, whether formal or informal, is one of the most critical elements in the overall effectiveness and well being of the Department.



Chief Ronnie Coleman once wrote that the symbols of the fire service, such as the Maltese cross and our gold badges with their bugles, contain an unspoken contract with the society that recognizes them. There's an implied set of behaviors that go along with that concept. The culture of an organization that places a high priority on respect, dignity, discipline and sense of duty will go a long way toward sustaining the credibility of those symbols.

### Recommendations

Based upon the results, it is apparent that the current organizational culture does not match the desired culture. Areas needing improvement have been identified and a strategic plan should be established. Summarized below are recommendations for improving the organizational culture, thus reducing the risk of injury, loss of life, and property damage.

First, the entire organization must clearly understand the vision and mission of the organization. The primary objective of the Coppell Fire Department is to enhance the quality of life for our members, citizens, and visitors. To accomplish this task involves commitment from the entire organization to place a high priority on implementing the "ideal" culture within the Department. Because culture is so deeply rooted in the organization's history and collective experience, working to change it requires a major investment of time and resources.

The second recommendation is to enhance the Department's leadership. Major change to an organization is usually impossible unless the Chief Administrator is an active supporter; individuals alone, no matter how competent or charismatic, never have all the assets needed to overcome tradition. The need for strong leadership cannot be

overlooked during the change and implementation process; therefore, the Fire Chief must fully support the results and provide exceptional leadership towards implementation.

The third recommendation is to distribute ONI survey results to station Captains and have them review with their subordinates to identify specific areas of improvement towards reducing Gaps outlined in the ONI survey. Implementing the “ideal” organizational culture involves significant change. When firefighters lack ownership of an idea, they usually resist it, even when it is in their best interest. They simply don’t like the idea of being manipulated or feeling like pawns of the system. Therefore, it is essential to allow them to give input and be a part of any changes.

The next recommendation is to have an Officer’s Summit to review recommendations from Department members, discuss areas of improvement, and develop an Action Plan for implementation. Each Officer should actively participate on behalf of their assigned personnel.

The fifth recommendation is the establishment of a formal Leadership Action Plan (LAP) documenting specific areas of improvement identified throughout the ONI survey and Officer’s Summit. The LAP will outline a path of continuous improvement for the future with a clearer sense of direction and purpose. The printed document will ensure the organization adapts appropriately to the desired changes for improvement and measure those changes as progress is made.

The next recommendation relates to follow-up. With any change in culture, its effectiveness must be monitored. Therefore, the Department should establish monthly Officer’s Meetings to follow up and discuss progress. The meetings should primarily concentrate on implementing areas of improvement outlined in the LAP. Each Officer

should be prepared to discuss specific actions taken for themselves and personnel assigned to their command.

The final recommendation is to solicit outside assistance. Assistance from a change agent outside the system may be indicated. Without such help, it is difficult for insiders to view the “reality” as something they’ve constructed, and to see meaning in things they normally take for granted.

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## APPENDIX A

**CITY OF COPPELL  
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

**ONI**

**Organizational Needs Inventory**

**ITEM SCORES**

June 16, 2006

Prepared by  
The Management Connection, Inc.  
979.846.4481

## ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS INVENTORY ITEM SCORES

**INSTRUCTIONS:** As you interpret and give meaning to specific scores, keep the following points in mind:

1. The scores are averages (means). They range from 0 (poorest description) to 10 (best description). The descriptions given by specific persons may differ considerably from these scores.
2. The *actual* descriptions reported below are a matter of perception. However, their value is not diminished because of that fact. Our private perceptions are the reality to which we relate. But it should not be forgotten that perceptions do not always accurately represent objective reality. The perceptions of large numbers of people in a given organization may be strongly influenced by stereotypes, biases, and other forms of distortion.
3. The *ideal* descriptions may or may not in reality be ideal for your organization as it exists today but may, indeed, be an ideal toward which it should strive to move over time.
4. It is often helpful in interpreting data such as these to make sure different points of view are given careful consideration. If a strong consensus appears to be developing, especially if the interpretations of one person seem to always be accepted, it may be useful to appoint a person or small group as a devil's advocate to introduce alternative viewpoints.



## ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS INVENTORY ITEM SCORES

The items presented below are in descending order by gap percentage.  
Each Item statement tends to characterize organizations that have  
**BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURES, DIRECTIVE LEADERSHIP,  
AND COMPETITIVE CULTURES.**

ITEM	ACTUAL AND IDEAL SCORES AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM		
72	The organization is top-heavy with management and support staff. Actual: 1.1 (N=19)    Ideal: 3.4    Gap: -2.3 (218%).		
45	Considerable conflict and distrust exists within management. Actual: 4.9 (N=18)    Ideal: 0.3    Gap: 4.6 (95%).		
19	Company managers jealously protect their turf and resent others' concern about the units they manage. Actual: 6.1 (N=18)    Ideal: 0.6    Gap: 5.5 (90%).		
76	The person to whom I report seems to view me more as a cost of doing business than as a human being. Actual: 2.5 (N=19)    Ideal: 0.4    Gap: 2.1 (84%).		
108	The left hand does not know what the right hand is doing in this company. Actual: 4.2 (N=19)    Ideal: 0.8    Gap: 3.4 (81%).		
70	Because rapid change is occurring, company members are becoming increasingly insecure. Actual: 4.1 (N=19)    Ideal: 1.1    Gap: 3.0 (74%).		
38	Management too often falls back on rules and power rather than reasoning with and teaching their subordinates. Actual: 4.0 (N=18)    Ideal: 1.1    Gap: 2.9 (72%).		
111	Management assumes that because people are inherently lazy, they do their best work only when under threat. Actual: 2.4 (N=19)    Ideal: 0.7    Gap: 1.7 (72%).		
82	Good upward communication tends to be left to chance. Actual: 5.7 (N=19)    Ideal: 1.7    Gap: 4.0 (71%).		
120	Competition for career advancement reduces the cooperation needed to achieve company goals. Actual: 3.6 (N=19)    Ideal: 1.1    Gap: 2.5 (70%).		
106	Like most others, our company is a machine that operates solely for the benefit of top management and stockholders. Actual: 2.1 (N=19)    Ideal: 0.7    Gap: 1.4 (66%).		
86	Most employees see their jobs in terms of performing certain activities rather than achieving company goals. Actual: 5.9 (N=19)    Ideal: 2.0    Gap: 3.9 (66%).		
34	Company traditions and "going by the book" often interfere with clear thinking and effective decision making. Actual: 3.9 (N=18)    Ideal: 1.4    Gap: 2.5 (64%).		
43	Management may have a clear vision of the company's future, but it has no positive influence at the lower levels. Actual: 4.0 (N=18)    Ideal: 1.5    Gap: 2.5 (62%).		
119	Decision making in this company is typically authoritarian and arbitrary. Actual: 3.3 (N=18)    Ideal: 1.4    Gap: 1.9 (57%).		
109	Since specialists design our jobs, members of the company seldom attempt to improve the designs of their own jobs. Actual: 3.2 (N=19)    Ideal: 1.4    Gap: 1.8 (57%).		

## ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS INVENTORY ITEM SCORES

The items presented below are in descending order by gap percentage.  
Each Item statement tends to characterize organizations that have  
**BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURES, DIRECTIVE LEADERSHIP,  
AND COMPETITIVE CULTURES.**

ITEM	ACTUAL AND IDEAL SCORES AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM
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- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 47  | Members are encouraged to do their own jobs and avoid concern for work that is not in their job descriptions. Actual: 4.2 (N=18) Ideal: 1.9 Gap: 2.3 (55%).      |
| 101 | Management seems to assume that the less you know about what is going on throughout the company the better. Actual: 2.9 (N=19) Ideal: 1.3 Gap: 1.6 (55%).        |
| 125 | Company members have little time to think about being creative and innovative. Actual: 2.6 (N=19) Ideal: 1.2 Gap: 1.4 (53%).                                     |
| 23  | Management assumes that most people would rather be told what to do than to think and make decisions. Actual: 2.8 (N=18) Ideal: 1.4 Gap: 1.4 (50%).              |
| 65  | Competent, ambitious individualists often get promoted here even though they are not good team players. Actual: 4.2 (N=18) Ideal: 2.1 Gap: 2.1 (50%).            |
| 36  | Status symbols are an important means of showing who, in the company, has authority and power. Actual: 4.7 (N=18) Ideal: 2.4 Gap: 2.3 (49%).                     |
| 123 | Because it is heavily loaded with bureaucracy, our organization is stable but sluggish. Actual: 3.0 (N=19) Ideal: 1.6 Gap: 1.4 (46%).                            |
| 52  | Our managers alienate their subordinates by giving orders when a friendly suggestion would be sufficient. Actual: 3.0 (N=19) Ideal: 1.6 Gap: 1.4 (46%).          |
| 92  | Primarily concerned with pay, our employees must always be on guard to make sure they are treated fairly. Actual: 3.3 (N=19) Ideal: 1.8 Gap: 1.5 (46%).          |
| 60  | The company makes clear distinctions and permits little movement between line managers, ... Actual: 4.2 (N=19) Ideal: 2.4 Gap: 1.8 (43%).                        |
| 102 | In this company job descriptions are very stable; they change little over time. Actual: 5.0 (N=19) Ideal: 7.1 Gap: -2.1 (42%).                                   |
| 7   | Too much red tape makes it difficult for company members to get their work done. Actual: 4.3 (N=18) Ideal: 2.5 Gap: 1.8 (42%).                                   |
| 49  | The company's commitment to preserving its traditions makes it slow to adapt. Actual: 2.6 (N=18) Ideal: 1.5 Gap: 1.1 (42%).                                      |
| 18  | The company misses opportunities because management is unresponsive to its external environment. Actual: 3.6 (N=18) Ideal: 2.1 Gap: 1.5 (42%).                   |
| 20  | Management is more concerned that everyone follow the rules than that they achieve meaningful goals. Actual: 3.9 (N=18) Ideal: 2.4 Gap: 1.5 (39%).               |
| 22  | Since "familiarity breeds contempt," friendships between members at different organization levels are discouraged. Actual: 2.1 (N=18) Ideal: 1.4 Gap: 0.7 (34%). |

**ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS INVENTORY  
ITEM SCORES**

The items presented below are in descending order by gap percentage.  
Each Item statement tends to characterize organizations that have  
**BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURES, DIRECTIVE LEADERSHIP,  
AND COMPETITIVE CULTURES.**

ITEM	ACTUAL AND IDEAL SCORES AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM
103	Our managers tend to supervise very closely. Actual: 3.9 (N=19)    Ideal: 2.6    Gap: 1.3 (33%).
33	The company simplifies its jobs so employees can be easily trained and, if necessary, easily replaced. Actual: 3.8 (N=18)    Ideal: 2.8    Gap: 1.0 (27%).
73	To maintain control, management relies heavily on rules and regulations, backed by strong authority. Actual: 3.7 (N=19)    Ideal: 2.8    Gap: 0.9 (24%).
61	To avoid offending their immediate supervisors, members are very careful to communicate through formal channels. Actual: 5.7 (N=19)    Ideal: 5.7    Gap: 0.0 (0%).
48	To maintain order and control, the company makes sure that very few employees report to a given manager. Actual: 4.2 (N=18)    Ideal: 4.2    Gap: 0.0 (0%).

## ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS INVENTORY ITEM SCORES

The items presented below are in descending order by gap percentage.  
Each item statement tends to characterize organizations that have  
**VERSATILE STRUCTURES, PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP,  
AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURES.**

ITEM	ACTUAL AND IDEAL SCORES AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM		
85	Relationships within the company are free from suspicion and questioning of others' motives. Actual: 3.0 (N=19) Ideal: 8.0 Gap: -5.0 (165%).		
16	Employees at all levels have a high degree of trust in one another. Actual: 3.6 (N=18) Ideal: 9.0 Gap: -5.4 (150%).		
71	Management welcomes new ideas--even ideas that differ from their own. Actual: 4.1 (N=19) Ideal: 8.6 Gap: -4.5 (110%).		
54	Most company members are inspired by their awareness of the company's history and its vision for the future. Actual: 3.9 (N=19) Ideal: 8.2 Gap: -4.3 (109%).		
56	The company has highly effective lateral communication. (Lateral refers to people who are on the same level.) Actual: 4.6 (N=19) Ideal: 9.5 Gap: -4.9 (106%).		
96	The company makes good use of task forces and committees to encourage teamwork. Actual: 4.3 (N=19) Ideal: 8.4 Gap: -4.1 (94%).		
79	Members' excitement about the company and their work stimulates their creativity and productivity. Actual: 4.3 (N=19) Ideal: 8.2 Gap: -3.9 (90%).		
41	Our managers are more likely to praise than criticize. Actual: 5.0 (N=18) Ideal: 9.2 Gap: -4.2 (84%).		
90	Members of the company feel included in the decision-making process. Actual: 4.3 (N=19) Ideal: 7.9 Gap: -3.6 (83%).		
28	Employees at all levels feel free to communicate openly and honestly with senior management. Actual: 4.7 (N=18) Ideal: 8.6 Gap: -3.9 (83%).		
68	Our managers are good listeners. Actual: 4.9 (N=19) Ideal: 8.9 Gap: -4.0 (82%).		
44	Members identify with and support the company as if it belonged to them. Actual: 5.0 (N=17) Ideal: 9.0 Gap: -4.0 (80%).		
116	Company members are confident that top executives will fulfill their commitments. Actual: 4.9 (N=19) Ideal: 8.7 Gap: -3.8 (78%).		
104	Management gets extensive input from the persons who will be affected by a given decision. Actual: 4.2 (N=19) Ideal: 7.4 Gap: -3.2 (76%).		
13	Management does an excellent job of communicating the company's vision. Actual: 5.0 (N=18) Ideal: 8.6 Gap: -3.6 (72%).		
31	Workers know management is doing all it can to protect their jobs and ensure their long-term employment. Actual: 5.0 (N=18) Ideal: 8.6 Gap: -3.6 (72%).		
3	The company places high value on maintaining relationships of trust. Actual: 5.3 (N=18) Ideal: 9.0 Gap: -3.7 (70%).		

## ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS INVENTORY ITEM SCORES

The items presented below are in descending order by gap percentage.  
Each item statement tends to characterize organizations that have  
**VERSATILE STRUCTURES, PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP,  
AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURES.**

ITEM	ACTUAL AND IDEAL SCORES AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM
4	Company leaders try to relate personally to everyone and to minimize status differences among members. Actual: 4.9 (N=18) Ideal: 8.2 Gap: -3.3 (68%).
126	A high level of trust makes close supervision unnecessary in this company. Actual: 5.3 (N=19) Ideal: 8.9 Gap: -3.6 (68%).
67	Employees know that management is genuinely concerned about their well-being. Actual: 5.5 (N=19) Ideal: 9.1 Gap: -3.6 (65%).
42	Free and open communication across departmental or divisional lines is encouraged and is highly effective. Actual: 5.0 (N=18) Ideal: 8.2 Gap: -3.2 (64%).
115	Open communication throughout the company empowers members to make informed decisions. Actual: 5.0 (N=19) Ideal: 8.2 Gap: -3.2 (64%).
114	Most members will sacrifice to ensure the company's long-term success. Actual: 4.9 (N=19) Ideal: 7.9 Gap: -3.0 (62%).
55	Our managers do everything possible to help their subordinates be effective. Actual: 5.5 (N=19) Ideal: 8.9 Gap: -3.4 (62%).
10	Management tends to elevate the consciousness of employees, inspiring new heights of achievement and growth. Actual: 5.3 (N=18) Ideal: 8.5 Gap: -3.2 (61%).
80	Our employees feel a strong obligation to other employees to do their own jobs well. Actual: 5.7 (N=19) Ideal: 9.1 Gap: -3.4 (60%).
69	The company is committed to fairness in all its dealings. Actual: 5.8 (N=19) Ideal: 9.3 Gap: -3.5 (60%).
100	Company members always have access to the resources they need to perform effectively. Actual: 5.5 (N=19) Ideal: 8.8 Gap: -3.3 (60%).
78	Strongly committed to teamwork, our managers seldom place their own department's needs above the company's. Actual: 4.5 (N=19) Ideal: 7.1 Gap: -2.6 (58%).
6	The company's high standards and productivity expectations are enthusiastically supported by most of its members. Actual: 5.1 (N=18) Ideal: 8.1 Gap: -3.0 (58%).
30	Our employees have a strong sense of pride and company ownership. Actual: 6.0 (N=18) Ideal: 9.4 Gap: -3.4 (57%).
121	Because of favorable attitudes toward the company, its members strive to be cooperative and productive. Actual: 5.4 (N=18) Ideal: 8.5 Gap: -3.1 (57%).
93	Our managers tend to be outstanding delegators. Actual: 4.6 (N=19) Ideal: 7.2 Gap: -2.6 (56%).

## ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS INVENTORY ITEM SCORES

The items presented below are in descending order by gap percentage.  
Each item statement tends to characterize organizations that have  
**VERSATILE STRUCTURES, PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP,  
AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURES.**

ITEM	ACTUAL AND IDEAL SCORES AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM		
66	Members of the company are quality conscious and committed to improving the quality of their own work. Actual: 5.6 (N=17) Ideal: 8.7 Gap: -3.1 (55%).		
88	The company is highly flexible and adaptive when change is called for. Actual: 5.4 (N=19) Ideal: 8.3 Gap: -2.9 (54%).		
117	Management achieves control primarily through the positive attitudes and values of company members. Actual: 5.4 (N=19) Ideal: 8.2 Gap: -2.8 (52%).		
62	The company responds rapidly to market and other changes in its external environment. Actual: 5.4 (N=19) Ideal: 8.2 Gap: -2.8 (52%).		
29	Most employees share top management's view that the company is outstanding and has a brilliant future. Actual: 5.8 (N=18) Ideal: 8.8 Gap: -3.0 (51%).		
89	The person to whom I report has a genuine interest in me as an individual. Actual: 5.9 (N=19) Ideal: 8.9 Gap: -3.0 (51%).		
113	Cooperation within the company is highly valued and rewarded. Actual: 5.7 (N=19) Ideal: 8.6 Gap: -2.9 (51%).		
94	Practicing open communication, management keeps members informed unless confidentiality is clearly an issue. Actual: 5.7 (N=19) Ideal: 8.4 Gap: -2.7 (48%).		
58	Company members feel secure in their jobs so long as they do their best and are honest in dealing with others. Actual: 6.1 (N=19) Ideal: 8.8 Gap: -2.7 (45%).		
27	Our leaders encourage their followers to believe in their own potential. Actual: 6.2 (N=18) Ideal: 9.0 Gap: -2.8 (45%).		
112	Management delegates decisions to the lowest level at which they can be made effectively. Actual: 5.3 (N=19) Ideal: 7.6 Gap: -2.3 (44%).		
107	Our managers empower their subordinates rather than keep them weak as a means of control. Actual: 5.0 (N=19) Ideal: 7.2 Gap: -2.2 (44%).		
15	There is a very real sense in which members of our organization are a company family. Actual: 6.0 (N=18) Ideal: 8.6 Gap: -2.6 (44%).		
35	The company gives members maximum freedom to think and use their best judgment. Actual: 5.8 (N=18) Ideal: 8.3 Gap: -2.5 (43%).		
63	Status differences within the company are not a barrier to open and honest communication. Actual: 4.7 (N=18) Ideal: 6.7 Gap: -2.0 (42%).		
46	The company is highly innovative. Actual: 6.5 (N=18) Ideal: 9.2 Gap: -2.7 (41%).		

## ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS INVENTORY ITEM SCORES

The items presented below are in descending order by gap percentage.  
Each item statement tends to characterize organizations that have  
**VERSATILE STRUCTURES, PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP,  
AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURES.**

ITEM	ACTUAL AND IDEAL SCORES AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM
77	The leadership style of our managers is more participative than autocratic. Actual: 5.7 (N=19) Ideal: 8.0 Gap: -2.3 (41%).
64	Managers try to place their subordinates in work in which their subordinates are interested. Actual: 5.8 (N=19) Ideal: 8.2 Gap: -2.4 (41%).
59	Members of the company see innovation as an important part of their jobs. Actual: 5.7 (N=19) Ideal: 8.0 Gap: -2.3 (41%).
32	The company constantly and deliberately seeks ways to improve itself. Actual: 6.7 (N=18) Ideal: 9.4 Gap: -2.7 (41%).
53	Our employees tend to think of themselves as team members rather than closely supervised subordinates. Actual: 6.1 (N=19) Ideal: 8.6 Gap: -2.5 (41%).
105	A spirit of teamwork is strongly encouraged and practiced within the company. Actual: 6.2 (N=19) Ideal: 8.7 Gap: -2.5 (40%).
124	Management assumes some responsibility rather than just labeling low performers as lazy and incompetent. Actual: 5.0 (N=19) Ideal: 7.0 Gap: -2.0 (40%).
84	As it grows, the company maintains commitment to certain values and traditions that give it a very special identity. Actual: 5.9 (N=19) Ideal: 8.2 Gap: -2.3 (39%).
83	Members share responsibility and receive a fair share of company rewards. Actual: 5.8 (N=19) Ideal: 7.9 Gap: -2.1 (36%).
25	Competition among company members seldom, if ever, works against the best interests of the company. Actual: 5.3 (N=18) Ideal: 7.2 Gap: -1.9 (36%).
12	By their actions, our managers express great faith in their subordinates. Actual: 6.0 (N=18) Ideal: 8.1 Gap: -2.1 (35%).
74	Low resistance to change enables the company to adapt rapidly to changes in market conditions. Actual: 4.9 (N=19) Ideal: 6.6 Gap: -1.7 (35%).
26	Our managers tend to have strong confidence in the integrity and ability of their subordinates. Actual: 6.7 (N=18) Ideal: 9.0 Gap: -2.3 (35%).
2	The company values its specialists, but it also values cross-training so that members develop a variety of skills. Actual: 6.9 (N=18) Ideal: 9.2 Gap: -2.3 (33%).
24	In our company's meetings, managers usually seek member participation. Actual: 6.0 (N=18) Ideal: 7.9 Gap: -1.9 (32%).
110	Management operates with as few strictly enforced rules and regulations as possible. Actual: 4.9 (N=19) Ideal: 6.4 Gap: -1.5 (31%).

## ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS INVENTORY ITEM SCORES

The items presented below are in descending order by gap percentage.  
Each item statement tends to characterize organizations that have  
**VERSATILE STRUCTURES, PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP,  
AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURES.**

ITEM	ACTUAL AND IDEAL SCORES AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM
122	Management is less concerned with who has authority than with who is an authority (who has good solutions). Actual: 4.9 (N=19) Ideal: 6.4 Gap: -1.5 (31%).
97	Management appears to believe that most employees want to assume responsibility for the quality of their work. Actual: 5.8 (N=19) Ideal: 7.6 Gap: -1.8 (31%).
95	When not at work, members take great pride in being identified with the company. Actual: 7.1 (N=19) Ideal: 9.2 Gap: -2.1 (30%).
118	Management expects high performance from everyone, including initiative to identify and solve problems. Actual: 7.1 (N=19) Ideal: 9.2 Gap: -2.1 (30%).
99	The company is an industry leader in applying new technologies and services. Actual: 6.2 (N=19) Ideal: 8.0 Gap: -1.8 (29%).
91	Members of the company's work units usually function effectively as a team. Actual: 7.2 (N=19) Ideal: 9.3 Gap: -2.1 (29%).
87	Management values the freedom of members to creatively solve problems more than the benefits of tight controls. Actual: 5.8 (N=19) Ideal: 7.4 Gap: -1.6 (28%).
21	Red tape seldom interferes with productivity and quality of work. Actual: 5.0 (N=18) Ideal: 6.4 Gap: -1.4 (28%).
8	Management involves subordinates in planning and decision making where appropriate. Actual: 6.1 (N=18) Ideal: 7.8 Gap: -1.7 (28%).
17	The company's ability to compete is greatly influenced by the cooperative spirit of its members. Actual: 6.7 (N=18) Ideal: 8.5 Gap: -1.8 (27%).
40	One of the company's strengths lies in its strong commitment to doing the right thing because it is the right thing. Actual: 7.4 (N=18) Ideal: 9.3 Gap: -1.9 (26%).
14	Management will go to any length to meet the needs of every customer. Actual: 6.5 (N=18) Ideal: 8.1 Gap: -1.6 (25%).
9	The company has a deep concern for all of its stakeholders; its stockholders, employees, customers, and others. Actual: 7.2 (N=18) Ideal: 9.0 Gap: -1.8 (25%).
98	The company places faith in its members by giving them a high degree of freedom to act. Actual: 6.3 (N=19) Ideal: 7.8 Gap: -1.5 (24%).
1	The company is highly committed to being progressive and on the cutting-edge in its industry. Actual: 7.6 (N=18) Ideal: 9.2 Gap: -1.6 (21%).
57	Most members of the company have a deep commitment to customer service. Actual: 7.9 (N=19) Ideal: 9.5 Gap: -1.6 (20%).



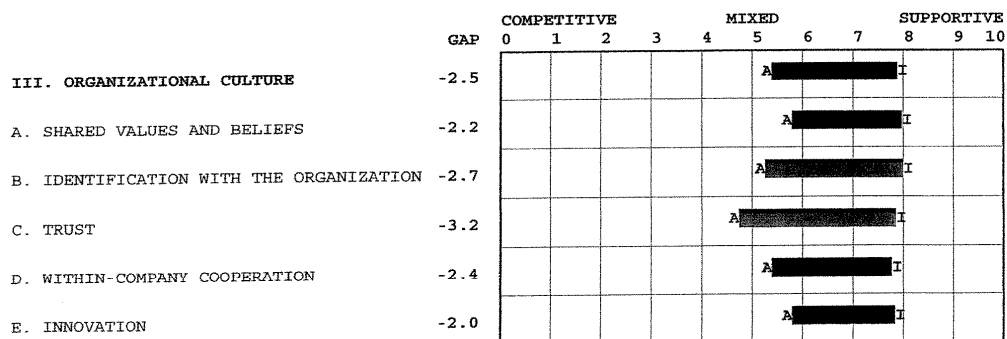
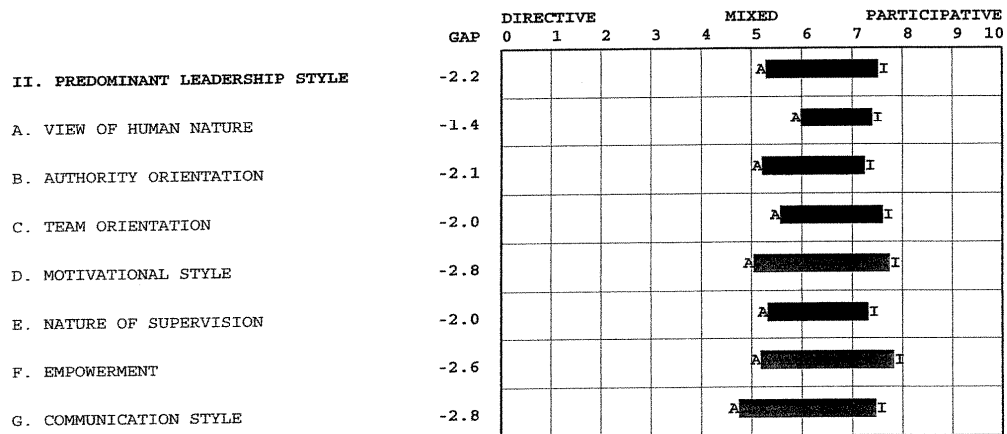
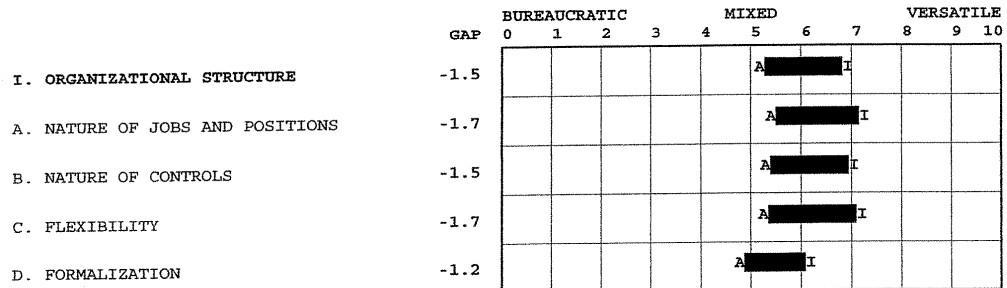
## ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS INVENTORY ITEM SCORES

The items presented below are in descending order by gap percentage.  
Each item statement tends to characterize organizations that have  
**VERSATILE STRUCTURES, PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP,  
AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURES.**

ITEM	ACTUAL AND IDEAL SCORES AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM
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- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 39 | The company respects the needs of its suppliers as well as its own needs for superior quality and service. Actual: 6.4 (N=18) Ideal: 7.6 Gap: -1.2 (19%).       |
| 81 | Constant training helps members of the company do their jobs well. Actual: 7.0 (N=19) Ideal: 8.2 Gap: -1.2 (17%).   |
| 11 | Very close supervision of subordinates is discouraged in our company. Actual: 5.8 (N=18) Ideal: 6.8 Gap: -1.0 (17%).  |
| 5  | The company assumes that its members will welcome opportunities to grow and develop new skills. Actual: 6.8 (N=18) Ideal: 7.9 Gap: -1.1 (16%).                  |
| 50 | The company's organization is informal and personal. Actual: 5.4 (N=18) Ideal: 6.2 Gap: -0.8 (15%).   |
| 37 | Management assumes that members want to support the organization's goals and work to fulfill its mission. Actual: 6.9 (N=17) Ideal: 7.9 Gap: -1.0 (14%).        |
| 51 | Management seems to assume that most members of the organization prefer to be emotionally involved in their work. Actual: 5.0 (N=18) Ideal: 4.4 Gap: 0.6 (12%). |
| 75 | Members of the organization often call their supervisors by their first names. Actual: 5.9 (N=19) Ideal: 5.4 Gap: 0.5 (8%).                                     |

# **ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS INVENTORY** **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



## APPENDIX B

# ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS INVENTORY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

	Bureaucratic			Mixed			Versatile				
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE					( 4.4) A		- 2.6		I ( 7.0)		
						( 5.4) A	- 1.4		I ( 6.8)		
						( 5.3) A	- 1.5		I ( 6.8)		
A. Nature of Job and Position						( 5.5) A	- 1.7		I ( 7.2)		
						( 5.5) A	- 1.0	I ( 6.5)			
						( 5.5) A	- 1.7		I ( 7.2)		
B. Nature of Control				( 3.0) A		- 4.0			I ( 7.0)		
						( 5.2) A	- 1.3	I ( 6.5)			
						( 5.4) A	- 1.5		I ( 6.9)		

	Bureaucratic			Mixed			Versatile				
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
C. Flexibility					( 4.8) A		- 2.5		I ( 7.3)		
						( 5.3) A	- 1.8		I ( 7.1)		
						( 5.4) A	- 1.7		I ( 7.1)		
D. Formalization					( 4.2) A		- 2.5		I ( 6.7)		
						( 5.7) A	- 1.3		I ( 7.0)		
					( 4.9) A		- 1.2		I ( 6.1)		

## PREDOMINANT LEADERSHIP STYLE

	Directive				Mixed				Participative		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
II. PREDOMINANT LEADERSHIP STYLE					(4.1) A		-3.7		I (7.8)		
						(5.5) A	-1.9		I (7.4)		
						(5.3) A	-2.2		I (7.5)		
A. View of Human Nature						(5.1) A	-2.1		I (7.2)		
							(6.3) A	-1.0	I (7.3)		
							(6.0) A	-1.4	I (7.4)		
B. Authority Orientation					(3.4) A		-4.0		I (7.4)		
						(5.1) A	-2.0		I (7.1)		
						(5.2) A	-2.1		I (7.3)		
C. Team Orientation						(5.0) A	-3.0		I (8.0)		
						(5.8) A	-1.8		I (7.6)		
						(5.6) A	-2.0		I (7.6)		

	Directive			Mixed					Participative		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
D. Motivational Style					(4.1) A		- 4.0			I (8.1)	
						(5.4) A		- 2.3		I (7.7)	
						(5.0) A		- 2.8		I (7.8)	
E. Nature of Supervision					(4.2) A		- 3.1			I (7.3)	
						(5.3) A		- 1.6		I (6.9)	
						(5.3) A		- 2.0		I (7.3)	
F. Empowerment					(4.2) A		- 4.1			I (8.3)	
						(5.6) A		- 2.2		I (7.8)	
						(5.2) A		- 2.6		I (7.8)	
G. Communication Style					(2.9) A		- 5.3			I (8.2)	
						(5.1) A		- 2.6		I (7.7)	
						(4.7) A		- 2.8		I (7.5)	

## ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Competitive			Mixed				Supportive			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
III. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE				( 4.3) A		- 3.9			I ( 8.2)	
					( 5.6) A	- 2.2			I ( 7.8)	
					( 5.4) A	- 2.5			I ( 7.9)	
A. Shared Values and Beliefs			( 3.9) A			- 4.4			I ( 8.3)	
					( 5.9) A	- 2.1			I ( 8.0)	
					( 5.8) A	- 2.2			I ( 8.0)	
B. Identification with the organization				( 4.1) A		- 4.5			I ( 8.6)	
					( 5.4) A	- 2.5			I ( 7.9)	
					( 5.3) A	- 2.7			I ( 8.0)	
C. Trust			( 3.1) A			- 5.2			I ( 8.3)	
					( 5.3) A	- 2.6			I ( 7.9)	
					( 4.7) A	- 3.2			I ( 7.9)	



	Competitive			Mixed			Supportive				
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
D. Within Company Cooperation						( 5.0) A	- 3.0			I ( 8.0)	
						( 5.7) A	- 1.8			I ( 7.5)	
						( 5.4) A	- 2.4			I ( 7.8)	
E. Innovation						( 5.6) A	- 2.2			I ( 7.8)	
						( 5.8) A	- 1.8			I ( 7.6)	
						( 5.8) A	- 2.0			I ( 7.8)	

## APPENDIX C

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## Coppell Fire Department Leadership Action Plan 2007





**Office of the Fire Chief**

On behalf of the entire Coppell Fire Department, I am pleased to present the department's first Leadership Action Plan. This Plan was drafted and composed by 20 of our Fire Department members, and will be used as a guide for the Department as we collectively strive to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

The Plan development task began with an Organizational Needs Inventory (ONI) to determine a current cultural "footprint." Next was a detailed analysis of that ONI, followed by input from all Fire Department team members to establish desired standards, or "ideals" for which we should strive to attain.

In broad terms, the desired culture was determined to be one that is versatile, participative, and supportive with special emphasis on the Team-Concept, effective communication, and a high level of trust. The entire effort was at times tedious and stressful; however, the final Plan far exceeds anything we had hoped for.

In closing, I want to thank everyone within the Fire Department for their input into this Plan. It represents not only the benchmark from where we currently are; but more importantly, outlines a path of continuous improvement for the future with a clearer sense of direction and purpose. This tool will ensure that we adapt appropriately to the desired changes for improvement and measure those changes as we go forward.

Sincerely,

Kevin Richardson  
Fire Chief



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## Background

An Organizational Needs Inventory is a survey and comprehensive report of the following three key areas within an organization: *Organizational Structure, Predominant Leadership Style, and Organizational Culture*. The ONI survey is a benchmark for continuous improvement that helps organizational leaders in planning for the future with a clearer sense of direction and purpose. It is a tool that helps ensure that leadership adapts appropriately to changes that occur over time.

This report is a summary of the Coppell Fire Department's Actual and Ideal scores for each of the three primary factors and their associated subfactors of the ONI. Each score has been measured on the 1 to 10 scale and plotted along a line between two extremes, i.e. *Bureaucratic vs. Versatile*. The Gap score is the difference between the Actual and Ideal scores.

The Coppell Fire Department has conducted a series of ONI's to develop the ideal organizational culture. The first ONI, conducted in December 1997, created a snapshot of the organizational culture as employees perceived it at the time. It also established a baseline from which future progress could be measured as the organizational development process moved the Department to its "ideal" or desired culture. However, no formal process was put in place to implement the desired improvements. Nevertheless, additional ONI's were conducted April 1999 and November 2003, and both have confirmed that some progress has been made.

With his appointment in 2007, Fire Chief Kevin Richardson conducted another ONI in June 2007 to identify a current cultural "footprint" of the organization. Chief Richardson felt that with the significant growth of the Fire Department, the city, and its population, that it was time to not only draft an aggressive Leadership Action Plan that focused on continuous improvement, but to put it to action.

The Planning Team Members who participated in the development of this Leadership Action Plan have reviewed it in its entirety, recognize the need for continuous improvement, and understand it is a valid tool that will lead to enhanced professional performance. Each Team Member is committed to its success by acting on the Areas For Improvement and will do everything possible to ensure its accomplishment



## Summary

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

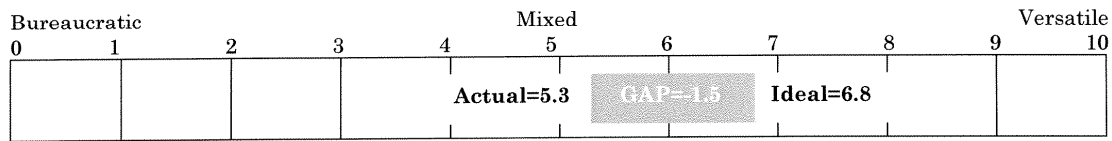
		BUREAUCRATIC				MIXED		VERSATILE				
		GAP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE		-1.5					A		I			
A. Nature of Jobs and Positions		-1.7					A		I			
B. Nature of Controls		-1.5					A		I			
C. Flexibility		-1.7				A		I				
D. Formalization		-1.2					A		I			

		DIRECTIVE				MIXED		PARTICIPATIVE				
		GAP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
II. PREDOMINANT LEADERSHIP STYLE		-2.2					A		I			
A. View of Human Nature		-1.4					A		I			
B. Authority Orientation		-2.1						A		I		
C. Team Orientation		-2.0					A		I			
D. Motivational Style		-2.8					A		I			
E. Nature of Supervision		-2.0					A		I			
F. Empowerment		-2.6					A		I			
G. Communication Style		-2.8					A		I			

		COMPETITIVE				MIXED		SUPPORTIVE				
		GAP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
III. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE		-2.5					A		I			
A. Shared Values and Beliefs		-2.2						A		I		
B. Identification with the Organization		-2.7					A		I			
C. Trust		-3.2				A				I		
D. Within-Company Cooperation		-2.4					A		I			
E. Innovation		-2.0						A		I		



## I. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



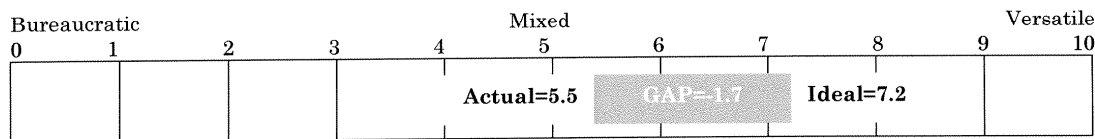
**BUREAUCRATIC**—Lots of rules, regulations, procedures, lines of authority and other structures that make an organization stable, but sluggish and rigid.

**VERSATILE**—Informal, personal, and flexible; constantly changing as needed for effectiveness; quick to respond to environmental changes.

From a size and facilities standpoint, the Department is close to being “built-out.” Development is being shifted in the form of future leadership being focused on the improvement and development of existing resources. Expectations for the Department’s future are:

- Develop the Team Concept between all Divisions within the Department
- Strengthen cooperation with other City Departments
- Foster strong relationships with key external agencies and area fire departments
- Be visible in the community and active in professional organizations as a proud representative of the Department and the City
- Develop a long-range plan to clearly communicate future vision, direction and expectations
- Be a model department in areas such as training and development, the effective use of technology, and high standards
- Expand community outreach and education
- Implement a process to ensure an open, inclusive, and timely flow of communication balanced with appropriate confidentiality
- Expand responsibilities and/or create different roles, positions, or opportunities for staff to continue personal and professional development



**A. Nature of Job and Position**

**BUREAUCRATIC**—Descriptions are clear, precise, and non-overlapping; employees are expected to limit their concerns to completing their assigned tasks.

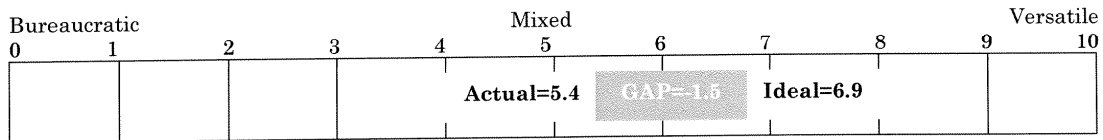
**VERSATILE**—Cross-trained members of self-directed teams and task forces cooperate to assume responsibility for shared objectives.

**Areas For Improvement:**

- Job descriptions (baseline):
  - Update job descriptions annually.
  - Review with each member of the department bi-annually.
  - Include during the evaluation process.
- Succession training:
  - Develop and communicate career development guidelines for each position.
  - Provide career counseling to all members.
- Increase use of Advisory Boards:
  - Increase opportunities for members to participate in research and development activities.
- Standard Operating Guidelines:
  - Review SOGs annually to ensure up to date and easy to interpret.
  - Develop process for department members to make comments/suggestions.
- Encourage self direction:
  - Motivate department members to constantly seek improvement in all areas.
  - Discourage status quo.
- Instill ownership throughout the organization: When members lack ownership of an idea, they usually resist it, even when it is in their best interest.
- Embrace change: The Fire Service is constantly changing. It is our responsibility to control change and the affects on the organization.



## B. Nature of Control



**BUREAUCRATIC**—Clearly defined standards (rules, regulations, etc.) plus close inspection and strong authority ensure conformity and predictability.

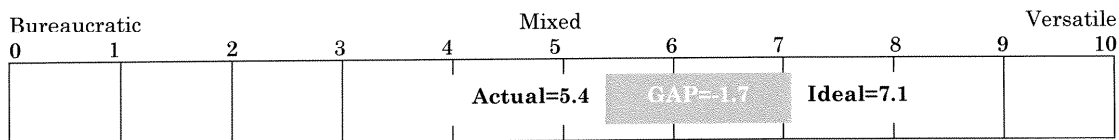
**VERSATILE**—Heavy reliance on self-control, self-discipline, goal-directedness, and positive attitudes keeps employees productive and on target.

### Areas For Improvement:

- Standard Operating Guidelines:
  - Develop clear SOGs that employees can easily understand.
  - Implement the use of SOGs for all training activities, "Train to the SOG."
  - Develop mechanism to review SOG suggestions from department members.
  - Seek consistent SOG interpretation and implementation between shifts.
  - Allow for flexibility when appropriate.
- Promote positive attitudes:
  - Understand the importance of positive attitudes.
  - The supervisor's attitude helps determine the attitudes of the crew.
- Goal Directedness:
  - Review the current Vision/Mission Statements and make revisions if necessary.
  - Establish clear goals and objectives.
  - Communicate roles and responsibilities towards teamwork.
  - Distribute the 5-year plan and communicate future goals/objectives.
  - Seek input during the planning and budget process.



### C. Flexibility

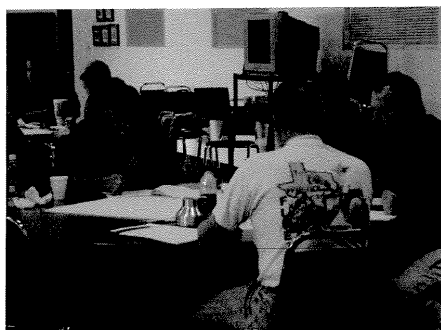


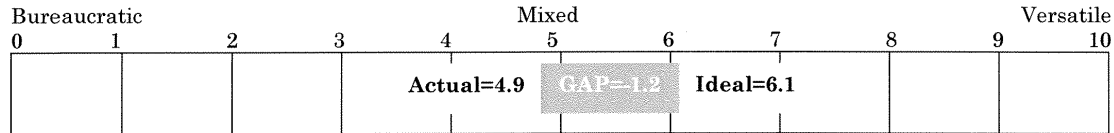
**BUREAUCRATIC**—Formal controls, clearly delineated jobs, turf protection, emphasis on job security, and fixed career paths produce rigidity.

**VERSATILE**—Commitment to growth, change, adaptability and rapid response to environmental demands produces a high degree of flexibility.

Areas For Improvement:

- Attitude based: Adaptability – avoid personal agendas.
- Put issue into perspective: Where does it fit in the big picture?
- Be open-minded and respectful of others.
- Flexibility should be based on mission, vision, and goals of the department.
- May require stepping out of “comfort zone” or “convenience.”
- Limited flexibility during emergency incident management procedures.
- Provide parameters and allow personnel flexibility on how to accomplish tasks.
- Use good communication to alleviate surprises.



**D. Formalization**

**BUREAUCRATIC**—Formality is expressed in use of titles, last names, status symbols and commitment to proper codes of dress and behavior.

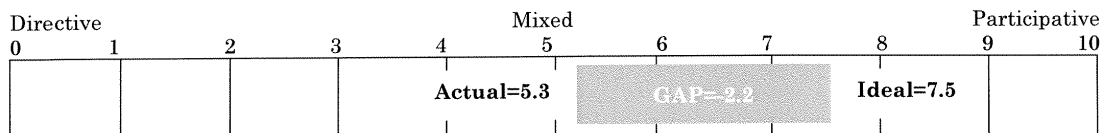
**VERSATILE**—Status differences are discouraged; employees on different levels relate informally as persons of equal worth; all are important and valued.

**Areas For Improvement:**

- Rank has its place:
  - Understand there is a time and place for formal rank structure.
  - Formal settings call for formalization. Casual settings call for informal settings.
  - Delicate balance: Understand and communicate the rank structure.
- Ease up: Respect is earned.
- Promote a family atmosphere:
  - Care for and treat everyone as if they are family.
- Chain of Command:
  - Recognize the chain of command for department issues.
  - Respect the immediate supervisor's ability to solve the problem at the lowest level.
  - Discourage personnel jumping chain of command "shopping for answers."
- Understand the importance of uniforms being uniform.
- There is a correct time and place for everything:
  - Formal meetings and training require a more formal participation.
  - Make sure questions and comments reflect the appropriate setting.



## II. PREDOMINANT LEADERSHIP STYLE

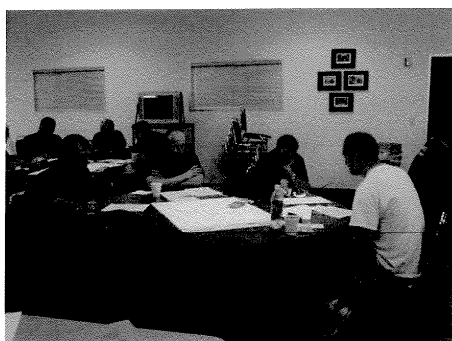


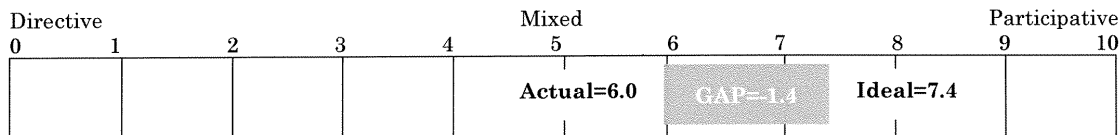
**DIRECTIVE**—Good leadership is the judicious use of authority; managers have a right to command and followers have an obligation to obey.

**PARTICIPATIVE**—Followers are transformed into self-leaders as they internalize their leaders' vision, mission values, attitudes, strategies, and goals.

The Fire Department emphasizes leadership practices that:

- Build trust
- Develop leadership at all levels
- Develop the organization
- Empower the staff
- Promote the team concept
- Create alignment of departments within the City-wide organizational culture
- Promote effective communications throughout the organization



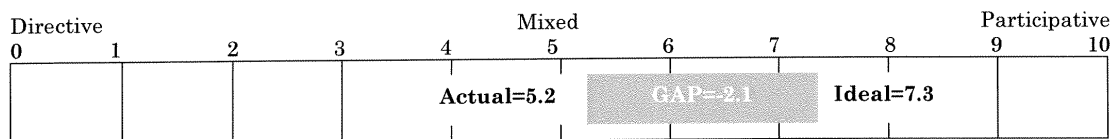
**A. View of Human Nature**

**DIRECTIVE**—Employees tend to be lazy and to avoid work and responsibility; they must be told what to do and monitored closely.

**PARTICIPATIVE**—Employees prefer to be productive and responsible; under good leadership, they work independently and creatively solve problems.

**Areas For Improvement:**

- Nip it in the bud:
  - Be proactive to the negativity.
  - Don't allow inappropriate behavior to continue.
  - Provide clear direction, expectations, and consequences.
  - Focus on correcting behavior.
- Put things in perspective:
  - Avoid blowing things out of proportion.
  - Be respectful of others. A simple issue may be "huge" to someone else.
  - Remember the feeling of the first day on the job.
  - "No matter how bad things get, this is the job we dreamed about" (Troy Aikman).
- "One rotten apple ruins the barrel."
  - Stop it at the source.
  - Open communication and find the problems.
  - Acknowledge that there is a problem.
  - Provide guidance and work towards improving the situation and solving the issue.
- "It is your job."
  - Understand that it is everyone's responsibility.
  - Set the parameters and get out of the way.

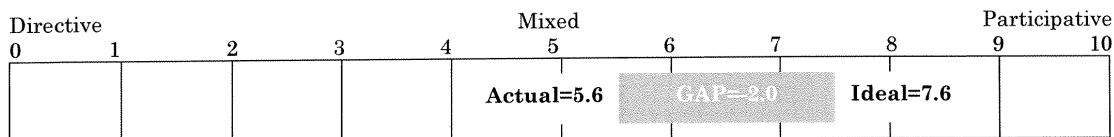
**B. Authority Orientation**

**DIRECTIVE**—Authority is delegated to enable managers to get their work done through others; authority would be liberally used for that purpose.

**PARTICIPATIVE**—Position authority is necessary but authority of competence would often carry more weight than authority of position.

**Areas For Improvement:**

- Assign duties appropriately: Certain tasks must be assigned to each member so that each has a specific job or task to perform.
- Grant Authority: Give members the right and power to act, to utilize certain resources, and to make decisions within predetermined or prescribed limits.
- Define Limitations: Be specific in telling members what authority they have and what they can or cannot do.
- Unity of command: Reassure members that their orders and authority will come from their immediate supervisor.
- Create responsibility: Create an obligation on the part of the member to perform the assigned duties satisfactorily.
- Supervisor accountability: Although we can and must delegate authority to subordinates, the supervisor's own personal accountability cannot be delegated. Assigning duties to members does not relieve the supervisor of their personal responsibilities.
- Stress that if one team fails, all teams fail.

**C. Team Orientation**

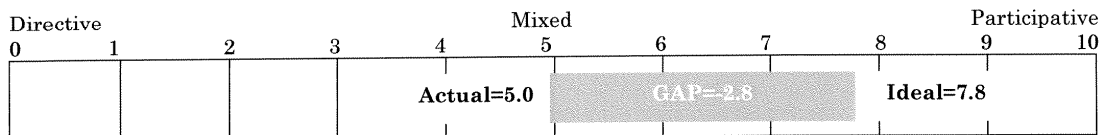
**DIRECTIVE**—As often as not, groups undermine both motivation and efficiency. Only individuals can be held accountable for results.

**PARTICIPATIVE**—Properly trained teams maintain a uniquely high level of self-discipline, self-motivation, productivity, and quality.

**Areas For Improvement:**

- Training:
  - Improve the training program
    - Officer Development
    - Technical Rescue
    - Firefighter/EMS
    - Safety
  - Seek more opportunities for training and encourage participation.
  - We have qualified instructors, use them more.
  - Use the same instructor for all shifts, leads to a consistent approach.
  - Train to the SOG, standardized methods department-wide.
- Dedication to teamwork:
  - Think beyond immediate shift.
  - Work towards blending the department from three individual shifts to one productive team.
  - Consider “big picture” when making decisions.
- Understand the most important single ingredient to our success is to know how to get along with people and working together as a team.



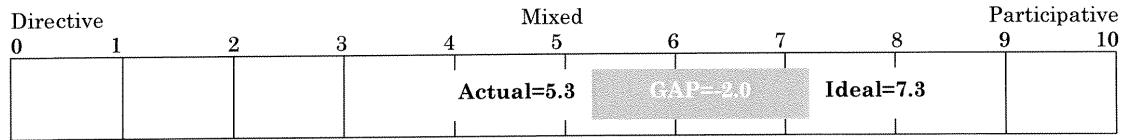
**D. Motivational Style**

**DIRECTIVE**—Motivation is based on a transaction (compensation exchanged for productive effort) between employee and employer.

**PARTICIPATIVE**—Going beyond a transaction, highest motivation results from a sense ownership—shared values, goals, and responsibilities.

**Areas For Improvement:**

- Empowerment
  - Committees vs. Advisory Boards
  - Respect committee's inputs, show respect for their work. They want to know the truth.
- Positive Attitude
  - Officers need to project positive attitude at all times.
  - Be a model that others can follow. "People do what people see."
  - Recognize and praise when appropriate.
- Ownership
  - People support what they create.
  - Trust: Why do we lock items in the fire stations?
  - Redirect ownership – to 'rubber meets the road'.
  - Encourage participation – committees; need additional programs; group/department participation (i.e. parties, EMS Fair, ceremonies).
- Personal Issues
  - Officers must "know their people".
  - Be Caring: "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care".
- Honest Communication
  - Understand negative feedback. Avoid becoming defensive.
  - Be honest: Members may not agree, but they will appreciate and respect the truth.
  - Be a good listener.

**E. Nature of Supervision**

**DIRECTIVE**—Close supervision is necessary to ensure high motivation and maximum productivity; when the cat's away the mice will play.

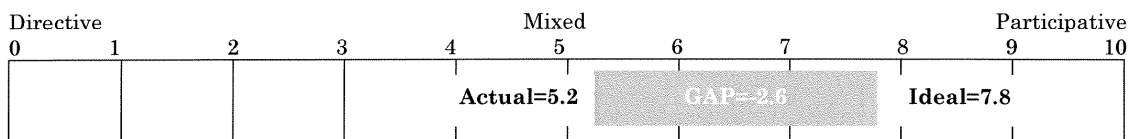
**PARTICIPATIVE**—Where subordinates share their leader's goals and values, close supervision may decrease motivation and sense of responsibility.

**Areas For Improvement:**

- Communicate your expectations.
  - What do our members expect out of the officers/supervisors?
  - Ensure all members have clear understanding of expectations.
- Set the pace.
  - Develop standardized shift change procedures.
  - Avoid surprises, communicate the daily, weekly, monthly objectives.
- Empower the members to make decisions.
  - Set parameters.
  - Give them the tools.
  - Provide expectations.
  - Consequences.
  - Are you asking or telling?
- Stop problems early (accountability). Allowing inappropriate behavior to continue implies the actions are acceptable.
- Give members every chance for success:
  - Provide a positive, warm, open, creative, and encouraging atmosphere to work in.
  - Make available all the right tools to work with.
  - Promote employee development. Growing employees make growing organizations.
  - Be consistent and fair. Give everyone the same opportunity without favoritism.



**F. Empowerment**

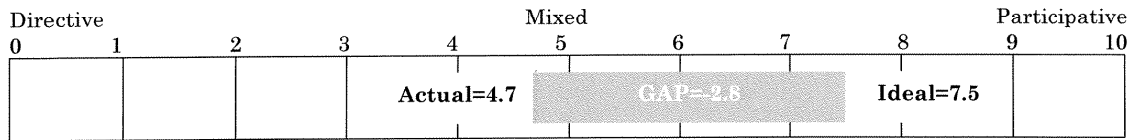


**DIRECTIVE**—Authority-based power is a manager's primary resource for influencing subordinates. Giving them more power undermines that influence.

**PARTICIPATIVE**—Good leaders provide a sense of direction and then do everything possible to provide the resources subordinates need to perform.

**Areas For Improvement:**

- Utilization of committees:
  - Transition from committees to advisory boards.
  - Allow for participation in research and development.
  - Involvement in submitting recommendations and solutions.
  - Genuinely considers and values input from all committee members.
- Leadership styles:
  - May be varied, but focus on solutions.
  - Should provide clear/concise objectives.
  - Support participation at all levels.
  - Openly communicate and provide direction.
- Succession training:
  - Encourage personal and professional growth.
  - Provide opportunities to try new things and acquire new skills.
  - Be supportive of their success.
  - Support the team concept that suggests "If you grow, we all benefit".
  - Identify avenues and plans for growth.

**G. Communication Style**

**DIRECTIVE**—Information is dispensed on a need-to-know basis. Too much information causes employees to meddle in others' areas.

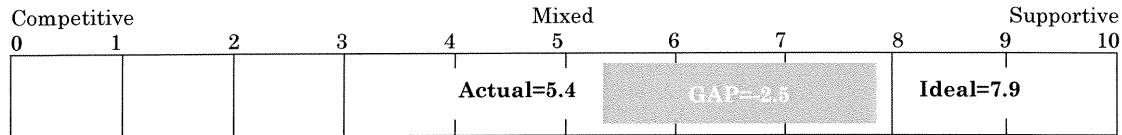
**PARTICIPATIVE**—A free flow of information is necessary for participative decision making, team building, shared goals and mutual support.

**Areas For Improvement:**

- Increase use of internal communication tools:
  - Brown bags: Monthly meetings from the City Manager's Office regarding city issues.
  - Stand up: Monthly meetings from the Fire Chief regarding department issues.
  - GroupWise Email: Ensure all department members are reviewing daily.
  - City Website: Provides City and Community information.
  - StaffNet: Intranet site designed for city employees only.
  - Coppell Community News: Cable channel designed to provide community information.
  - Coppell Clips: Automatic email updates for specific city departments and services.
  - Keep Firehouse data base calendar updated with all activities.
- Develop additional standardized communication opportunities:
  - Develop a weekly department newsletter.
  - Conduct scheduled staff meetings (officers, engineers, firefighters and F'TP).
  - Post and communicate results from committees and advisory boards.
  - Increase industry involvement at local, state, and regional levels.
  - Develop standardized process for shift change and "pass-on."
  - Implement process for Post Incident Analysis and communicate results to all.
- General communication values.
  - Be honest with one another, people respect the truth, good or bad.
  - Avoid secrets. Communicate information without violating confidentiality.
  - Be a good listener.



### III. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

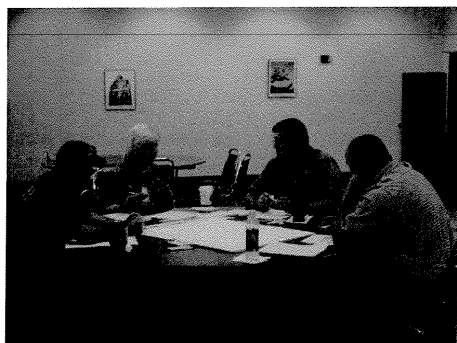


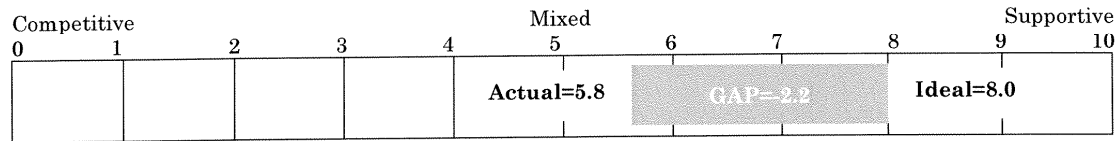
**COMPETITIVE**—Competition among employees, highly valued as a motivator, often reduces concern for cooperation and for the organization as a whole.

**SUPPORTIVE**—Members' mutual dependency, shared goals, and trust encourage cooperation and mutual empowerment.

The department expects the leadership within the organization to support and actively develop a versatile, participative, and supportive culture.

- Supportive: All members understand and act on the principle that recognition of mutual dependency, shared goals, and trust encourage cooperation, mutual respect, and a feeling of pride in identification with the organization.
- Participative: All members are developed into self-leaders as they internalize and practice the organization's vision, mission, and values. A sense of ownership and personal responsibility comes from participation in the flow of communication and ideas that lead to discussion, decisions, direction, and practices.
- Versatile: The structure of the organization is appropriately informal and personal, flexible whenever possible, able to adapt and change as needed for effectiveness, and capable of quick response to changes in internal and external environments.



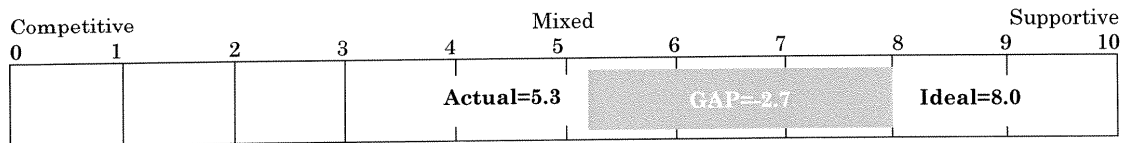
**A. Shared Values and Beliefs**

**COMPETITIVE**—Shared attitudes and values are of minimal importance; the name of the game is authority, power, and productivity.

**SUPPORTIVE**—Shared attitudes and values are the basis for teamwork, cooperation, and willingness to sacrifice for the common good.

**Areas For Improvement:**

- Need to review Vision/Mission statement:
  - Identify stakeholders in the community.
  - Review current programs and identify new programs to reflect community needs.
  - Include participation from all department members.
  - Revise Vision/Mission statement and Organizational Values as needed.
  - Implement new roles and responsibilities throughout the department.
  - Conduct annual "State of Department" presentation by Fire Chief.
- Encourage participation:
  - Allow all members opportunity to participate in goal-setting process.
  - Goal participation builds team spirit, enhances morale, and encourages buy-in.
  - Develop a Strategic Plan for the future.
  - Conduct training seminars to review the Strategic Plan with members.
  - Publish and distribute copies of finalized Strategic Plan including the Department Budget.
- Succession Planning:
  - Provide career counseling to all members of the organization.
  - Create a Career Development Guide.
  - Allow qualified members the opportunity to fulfill the next immediate position temporarily.
  - Create opportunities to work in Fire Administration (light duty, etc.).
  - Include additional personnel when attending local, regional, and state meetings.
  - Promote formal/informal training and education.
  - Review promotional process/requirements for industry standards.

**B. Identification with the Organization**

**COMPETITIVE**—The value of identification with the organization is totally overshadowed in importance by self-interests (opportunity for power, pay, and position).

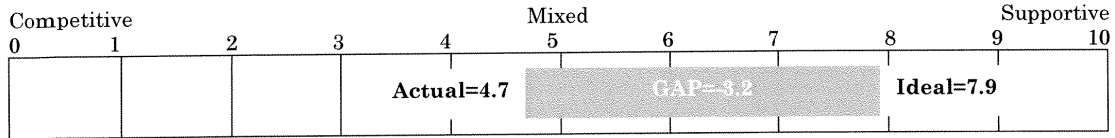
**SUPPORTIVE**—Members who strongly identify with their organization feel a sense of oneness with it. To support the organization is to support themselves.

**Areas For Improvement:**

- Recognize the past as we prepare for the future:
  - Organize a Historical Advisory Board.
  - Consider the feasibility for 50<sup>th</sup> year anniversary and celebration.
  - Continue traditional ceremonies (push-ins, medal day, swearing-in, etc.).
- Continue and develop activities to encourage camaraderie:
  - Sporting events such as softball league, golf tournaments, soccer, etc.
  - Participate in the annual Firefighter Olympics.
  - Christmas party.
  - Meet and greet the troops.
  - City awards banquet.
- Promote pride and ownership throughout the organization:
  - Avoid being our own worst enemy.
  - Instill a caring culture throughout the department.
  - Care about the city and community.
  - Care about the department, facilities, apparatus, and equipment.
  - Care about each other.
- Build a good reputation (regional).
  - Recognized for working very well with other departments.
  - Known as highly capable.
  - Proud to be department member.



### C. Trust

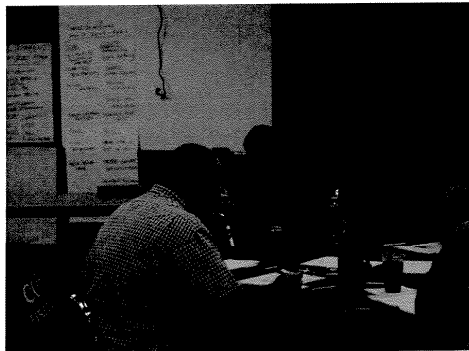


**COMPETITIVE**—Trust can be valuable but is often less so than a good contract. It is of little importance where agreements are clear and authority is strong.

**SUPPORTIVE**—Trust is highly valued—the basis for sound, cooperative, mutually empowering relationships upon which leadership is based.

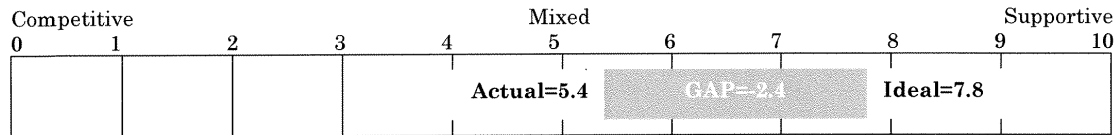
#### Areas For Improvement:

- Trust:
  - Must be earned not forced.
  - Communicate openly and honestly without distorting the information.
  - Show confidence in the abilities of our members and treat as skilled, competent associates.
  - Be inclusive, listen and value what others have to say, even if you don't agree.
  - Keep promises and commitments.
  - Cooperate and look for ways to help one another be right, not wrong.
  - Loyalty can be a double-edged sword. On one hand, it represents commitment and dedication. On the other, may represent limitations. Loyalty needs to be to the organization and department-wide.
  - Integrity: Make sure our actions match our words. The more credible we are, the more confident our people will be.





#### D. With-in Company Cooperation

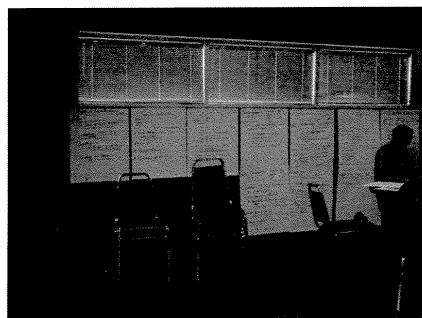


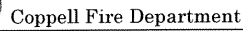
**COMPETITIVE**—Individual self-interest (competition for pay, power, and position) produces cooperation when it is needed to achieve an objective.

**SUPPORTIVE**—Cooperation, based on trust and shared self-interest, is necessary for maximum productivity and work satisfaction.

Areas For Improvement:

- Develop self-discipline throughout the organization:
  - Getting the job done without having to be told.
  - Clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.
  - Doing the right thing even when no one is looking.
- Promote teamwork:
  - When the crew cooperates with each other, the job gets done more effectively.
  - No one can do it alone.
- Know your people:
  - Understand the crew and know what they are capable of doing.
  - Identify areas of development and implement a plan for improvement.
  - Take interest in their personal lives.
  - Make people our priority. They are our greatest asset.





Competitive					Mixed					Supportive
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
					Actual=5.8	GAP=2.0		Ideal=7.8		

**SUPPORTIVE**—Every member has the potential to be creative and innovative; each should be freed, motivated, and empowered to actualize that potential.

- Embrace innovation:
  - Use committees and advisory boards.
  - Solicit input from all.
  - Challenge members to constantly seek improvement.
- Skills and knowledge base:
  - Encourage department members to continue professional development.
  - Provide opportunities for members to use skills and knowledge.
  - Tap into experience and expertise of department members.
- Fire service innovation:
  - Network with industry leaders to identify innovative techniques.
  - Constantly review process and procedures for technology improvements.
- Create positive change:
  - Significant results create confidence and a willingness to take risks.
  - Disrupts comfort level and encourages creative thinking.
  - Improvements generally come from the person performing the task.
  - Listen and consider innovation at all levels.
  - Develop trust and communicate effectively.



**Leadership Action Plan  
Planning Team Members**

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Baird, Jim  
Captain

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Baze, Taylor  
Captain

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Chavez, Joe  
Captain

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Cody, Mike  
Captain

---

Cravey, Debbie  
Administrative Services Manager

---

Daniels, Mark  
Captain

---

Elliott, Mark  
Captain

---

Foster, John  
Captain

---

Glover, John  
Deputy Chief, Operations

---

Greaser, Eric  
Captain

---

Joles, Everett  
Captain

---

Kinney, Kerry  
Captain

---

Kitchens, Jim  
Battalion Chief

---

McInis, Willie  
Captain

---

Oates, Tim  
Deputy Chief, Prevention

---

Patterson, John  
Emergency Management Officer

---

Richardson, Kevin  
Fire Chief

---

Russell, Tim  
Captain

---

Uppole, Matt  
Battalion Chief

---

White, Bryan  
Battalion Chief